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From Being to Doing: Anti-Racism As Action at Work

Transcript of a presentation by Ione Damasco
Academic Library Association of Ohio
October 2020

Hello everyone, and thank you for joining me today for this ALAO pre-conference session. My name is Ione Damasco, and I'm so fortunate to be able to spend some time with you all sharing some thoughts on how we can begin to do anti-racist work at our libraries.

What do I mean by this title? Well, if you're familiar with the term "ally," many people use the word "ally" as an identity. People like to say, "I'm an ally," to signal to others that they believe in equity, but it is not enough to say you're an ally. We need to use the word as a verb. What are we doing that actually supports others who are oppressed? What are the action steps we are taking to resist oppression and work toward social justice and equity?

More recently, I think people are starting to say that they are anti-racist, but again, it's not enough to say we are against racism. What are we actively doing to undo racist policies and practices? So I'm hoping that today's session will help us reframe our focus from claiming an anti-racist identity to engaging in anti-racist work.

Before we get started, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge that I am presenting from the University of Dayton on the traditional land of the Shawnee and Miami peoples as well as many other

sovereign nations of this region both past and present. As we come together to focus our attention on issues of equity and social justice, let's take a moment to honor with gratitude the Indigenous peoples who have stewarded this land throughout the generations and who continue to deal with the painful legacy of colonization, genocide, and forced removal. I encourage you to do some research about the land where you live and work. Do you know whose land it is? If you are not a member of the nations who inhabited this land first, then what does it mean for you to be a guest on this land? What are some action steps you can take in solidarity?

Accept: White supremacy culture exists

OK, so let's dive into things. The first thing I'm going to ask of you is to start with accepting this statement: White supremacy culture exists. If this statement makes you uncomfortable, I challenge you to sit with that discomfort and keep your mind open during this session. We often talk about our comfort zones, but in reality, we do the most growth and learning when we are facing some discomfort because that means we are being presented with new information that makes us question our previous assumptions. That is a good thing. Let's be

sure we stay in our learning zones together as we move through this session.

Let's break down the concept of culture since that is the heart of what we are exploring today. There are many definitions of culture, some of which you can read here. Culture is made up of many elements--some that are intrinsic or internally felt and some that are externally expressed through behaviors and artifacts such as symbols, clothing, food, etc. These definitions of culture are useful because they point to the fact that culture can be used to distinguish groups from one another, often through shared patterns of behavior but also through shared interpretations of artifacts, symbols, and behaviors. So one cultural group might interpret something like a flag in one way, perhaps seeing it as a symbol of patriotism, of national pride, as something to be revered, while another cultural group might perceive the same flag as the symbol of an oppressor, the symbol of an enemy nation-state, or something to be feared.

The other thing I like about these definitions of culture is the acknowledgment that culture is something we learn through socialization, subconsciously accept without question, and that is passed down from one generation to the next.

Iceberg model

Some of you might be familiar with Edward Hall's model of culture. Essentially Hall compared culture to an iceberg. When you see an iceberg floating in water the part that is visible above the surface is far smaller than the part of the iceberg that is beneath the surface of the water and therefore, less visible. If we think of culture as an iceberg, the tip of the iceberg represents the external expression of culture,

which includes behaviors and artifacts. The external elements of culture are generally explicitly learned, conscious, and can be changed easily. The rest of the iceberg represents all of the internal and implicit elements of culture, such as values, thinking patterns, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, unstated norms, etc., and these elements are unconsciously learned and therefore often much harder to change.

We are each shaped by culture, hold identities shaped by specific cultures that we are part of, and often share elements of culture with others who might identify as being part of a different cultural group. And cultures impact and influence one another as well. Think of it as different icebergs sometimes passing one another, sometimes colliding, and sometimes melting and blending together.

The same iceberg model can be applied to organizations. Just like people, organizations also have culture, which shows up both explicitly and implicitly. Organizations have beliefs, values, attitudes, shared assumptions, traditions, norms, and other unwritten rules. These cultural ideas get expressed through explicit means. For example, an organization's stated policies, processes, shared values, work structures, and goals are all explicit expressions of its culture.

We each bring to our organizations a sense of our own cultural identities and we have to navigate the way our identities interact with our organization's culture. This can be challenging if there are things that don't align between the two. Remember the statement I asked you to accept earlier? White supremacy culture has deep socio-historical roots in the United States and

permeates American society. This means that organizational culture is not immune to characteristics of white supremacy culture and for that matter, individuals aren't immune, either.

What is white supremacy culture? I think when we hear the phrase white supremacy, we imagine hate groups like the KKK or different Neo-Nazi groups like some of the ones that have become more prominent in the last few years. Maybe we think of social media posts that make statements about white nationalist pride or that use open insults that are race-based toward Black, Indigenous and other persons of color, but these are just the tip of the iceberg. Here are a couple of definitions of white supremacy culture that do a really great job of explaining the breadth and depth of what white supremacy actually is in the United States. This will be one of the rare times that I will read directly from the slide because I don't think I can say it any better than these two definitions have.

White supremacy culture is the series of characteristics that institutionalize whiteness and westernness as both normal and superior to other ethnic, racial, and regional identities and customs. While people often don't view this theorization of white supremacy as violent, it can lead to systemic discrimination and physical violence.

White supremacy culture is also the explicit to subtle ways that the norms, preferences, and fears of white, European-descended people overwhelmingly shape how we organize our work and institutions, see ourselves and others, interact with one another and with time, and make decisions.

Racist policies, racist ideas

Since we are looking at definitions, let's also define two important concepts that we need to understand if we are going to work to undo white supremacy culture in our organizations. Many of you may have read the book *How to Be an Anti-racist* by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi this past year. In this work, Kendi provides great definitions of both racism and anti-racism. So first, let's consider the term racism. Some people think racism refers to individual acts of prejudice between two people from different racial identities, usually acts from a white person toward a person of color. Kendi provides a deeper and broader definition of racism. He states that racism is the complex intertwining of racist policies and racist ideas.

Racist policies specifically refer to any measures that sustain inequity between racial groups. He goes on to say that racist policies are typically justified by racist ideas, which he defines as ideas that suggest one racial group is inferior or superior to another racial group. Racist ideas are used both to justify racist policies and to explain away racial inequities that exist in our society. One of the many problems with racist ideas is that they deflect our attention away from the real issues that are creating inequities among racial groups. So rather than pointing out that low levels of educational attainment among populations of color that are tied to poorly funded schools that are underfunded because of a legacy of redlining, which has led to the devaluing of neighborhoods with higher numbers of populations of color, someone might hold the racist idea that students of color don't get college degrees because they

don't know how to apply themselves or they don't work hard enough in school.

If racism is the combination of racist policies with racist ideas, then anti-racism, according to Kendi, is the collection of anti-racist policies that lead to racial equity and are substantiated by anti-racist ideas. I think this is pretty straightforward. Anti-racist policies are any measures that produce and sustain racial equity and anti-racist ideas argue that racist policies are the reasons for inequities between racial groups. Anti-racist ideas argue that the differences between groups based on race are not the reason for inequity, so the challenges a student of color might face in getting a college degree is not about their inherent individual ability. Those challenges arise from systemic problems, such as underfunding tied to geographical location that is tied again to the legacy of redlining.

So these are some questions that I would like you to use for critical reflection. Consider how these various definitions might intersect with the culture of our workspaces. How do racist ideas informed by white supremacy culture implicitly impact our organization's expressions of culture through external means such as our policies practices and stated expectations? How might racist ideas again, informed by white supremacy culture, impact underlying organizational beliefs attitudes and assumptions? Think of how you or your organization might define quote professional behavior or quote professional attire. Where does culture play a role in creating those unstated norms and definitions? This is a list of some characteristics and norms of white supremacy culture that show up in organizations.

Now I realize there are a lot of items listed here and we don't have the time to go through each one in detail, but in the references and resources list at the end you'll find two citations from where I pulled these from. The first resource is from Tema Okun, who provides a core set of characteristics and the second resource is a worksheet that builds upon and expands Okun's work. Some of these are almost self-explanatory, such as valuing official job titles over someone's experience in the case of hiring decisions. Some are worth exploring on your own by looking at the resources I list at the end. Here we will focus on a subset of these, the ones that I think we often see in library workplaces.

As I go through each, I will start off by looking at oppressive behaviors connected to each characteristic and I will follow with Liberating, actionable steps that can be taken to resist these hallmarks of white supremacy culture. One other thing I would like to point out, while the greatest responsibility for implementing liberatory action steps lies with the leaders of your libraries, each person also bears responsibility for them and for sustaining them throughout your library, regardless of position. Some of you may have more power to do so both formally and informally based upon your position or your social identities. For example, a white, cisgender, heterosexual male holds more informal power than an Asian American, cisgender, bisexual woman and if you truly want to act in allyship, if you hold more power, you will use it where you can to undo these harmful characteristics and norms.

Perfectionism

Let's start with perfectionism. Here's how perfectionism shows up at work in ways that

are Oppressive. Showing appreciation is the exception, not the norm. The norm is pointing out how a person or their work is inadequate. People are treated as if they are the mistakes rather than treating actions as mistakes. In oppressive workplaces, no time is spent on reflection when it comes to mistakes. No time is allotted for people to identify what lessons can be learned from mistakes. There is an ease and emphasis on pointing out what's wrong, but people often lack the ability to identify, acknowledge, and appreciate all the things that are going well. And what's really insidious about this is that people often internalize perfectionism, where they overemphasize their own quote failures and are unable to recognize where they have done good work. This can create a lot of harm to one's self-esteem and can contribute to low morale. Here are some liberating actions that can counter perfectionism.

Take the time to show people that each of their efforts are appreciated and stop stigmatizing Mistakes. Human beings will always make mistakes and rather than treat them as the worst possible thing that can happen at work, reframe mistakes as learning opportunities that can push us to challenge our underlying assumptions. People are not mistakes. When we provide feedback, we need to ensure that the feedback is constructive and provides people the opportunity to take ownership of their mistakes by giving them the chance to think creatively and offer up suggestions for what could have been done differently.

On a personal level, stop being your own worst critic. Extend the same grace to yourself that you would extend to others and accept that being overly self-critical can actually impede your ability to improve.

You can get caught up in shame which I'll talk about later. And shame is truly a dead end when it comes to making different choices.

Sense of urgency

Next, let's take a look at sense of urgency. A sense of urgency creates a highly stressed environment that creates barriers to being inclusive. Time is not given to allow for multiple perspectives to be considered, to encourage thoughtfulness, to think about long-term impacts and consequences, to engage in a truly democratic decision-making process. The focus is on deliverables, not the process of building capacity, community, or sustainability, nor is time given to consider what more equitable outcomes could exist. This can result in sacrificing the opportunity to create real allyship among different people and instead, in the name of producing quick results which are seen as wins, but wins for whom? Typically ones for the status quo, which in the United States means privileging the interests of white people over the needs of communities of color. And all of this is reinforced by the fact that we tend to over-promise, that we will deliver more with less.

To counter a permeating sense of urgency, priorities and timelines for projects should be set for sustainability and equity. People should be given the space to address issues as they come up in the moment, and timelines should account for the unexpected. Build an additional 20 percent beyond what you think the project timeline should be to give space and time for process and the unexpected. Not doing this means you are effectively cutting people's ability to contribute meaningfully. There is often only enough space for the same people to dominate decision-making and in most

organizations, that means people of color are left out.

Quantity over quality

Another hallmark of white supremacy culture is the value placed on quantity over quality. Connected to a sense of urgency, the value we place on quantity overlooks the importance of looking at our processes. We value quantitative metrics but don't think about the value of those things that cannot be measured easily. In libraries, that might mean looking at circulation statistics or door counts that provide raw numbers, but we don't look at how well we manage conflict or how we ensure democratic processes are part of our regular decision-making. There's also a lack of understanding that when there's conflict between content and process, process will prevail.

What this means is that if conflict arises over content, such as the topics of a meeting agenda, if attention isn't being paid to people's need to be heard, which is process, any decisions that will be made at that meeting will be undermined or disregarded. This is exacerbated by our discomfort with emotions or feelings arising as part of the decision-making process. In white supremacy culture, taking a quote logical approach is privileged over decisions that are made that takes people's feelings and emotions into account.

To move away from these oppressive actions, the focus of planning or projects should be on sustainability. Any cost benefit analysis should include all costs, including human costs. Planning should include goals around process, not just outcomes. For example, a process goal could be around being more inclusive and then thinking about how that can be implemented. Think

about how you can measure that kind of process goal and be flexible. There may be times when you have to move away from a strict agenda to address underlying concerns that people might have. If you have built in extra time that I mentioned before previously with countering a sense of urgency, then addressing those issues will already be accounted for.

Worship of the written word

Another trait of white supremacy culture is worship of the written word. This translates to a few things. First there is a belief that if something wasn't documented in writing, then it never really existed. So information that is shared verbally or decisions that were made in conversation, if not written down, can easily be ignored or dismissed. This over-emphasis on what's written down means that it can be easy to manipulate or gaslight people if what people communicate in other ways is not given the same weight. This also means that alternate forms of communication, information sharing are not valued. For example, in some cultures, storytelling is a highly valued and respected way of passing along information, but storytelling is not something we often think of with organizational culture.

This also means that we tend to value people with strong writing skills, but we don't necessarily value people who have strong relational skills because those are not easily documented. And finally, we also privilege quote standard American English so those who speak or write in any other way are seen as wrong or less intelligent.

Countering worship of the written word doesn't mean abandoning the process of documentation, but it does mean taking the time to determine what really needs to be

written down and what can be communicated in other ways. It means exploring, valuing, and validating different ways of sharing information, including ways that include relationship networks. If things are written down, avoid jargon or elitist language. And one of the most important things to be aware of is that language involves culture, power, lived experience and geography. These all shape how we use language and in white supremacy culture we are socialized to have a bias toward unaccented, standard English. We have to consciously work against that bias and actively listen for meaning to people who use English differently from that form.

Binary thinking

Another hallmark of white supremacy culture is either/or thinking or binary thinking. There's no sense that things can be both/and that we can hold sometimes conflicting ideas in the same space. This connects to the earlier concept of perfectionism because if everything is characterized just right or wrong, that leaves little space for learning from mistakes. It also means that we tend to oversimplify things and in doing so, we contribute to that problematic sense of urgency. There's no time to be creative and consider alternative approaches to a problem or a project. And binary thinking can be used as a weapon against those who want to consider an alternate path, because it pushes people to choose between a or b, and suppresses other options.

Liberatory thinking means taking a systems approach to thinking and acknowledging complexity. Move away from binary approaches and try to understand context as well as intersectionality. People are never singular

identities, and projects or problems that you're working to try to solve together rarely have single ways of getting to a resolution. Again, this means providing the space and time to do deeper analysis, to be creative, and propose more than two ways of doing something, and avoiding oversimplification. It also means again being intentional about providing space for marginalized perspectives and ideas to be brought forth. Binary approaches often suppress the concerns of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, so taking an intersectional, contextual, and systems thinking approach to work means elevating their perspectives.

Individualism and competition

White supremacy culture places a heavy emphasis on individualism and, concomitantly, on competition. Individual charismatic leaders are revered, and collective, collaborative, and cooperative work is Undervalued. Organizations that demonstrate this often have people working in silos, and competencies and comfort around working in teams are very low. People often feel they have the sole responsibility of solving problems. This feeds into a desire for individual recognition or credit because people don't work in groups. Accountability often goes up or down through a hierarchy, rather than among peers or constituents. This can feed other toxic characteristics such as perfectionism, since perfectionism is often internalized on an individual level.

Resisting individualism and competition means working collaboratively, taking a collective approach to projects and emphasizing community building as an important process component of work. Change and transformation is everyone's responsibility. We have to shift our thinking

from fighting over the same small pool of limited resources and instead, thinking of how we can create sustainable resources that are accessible to all. This will require mutual support as well as mutual accountability, and not just on an individual level, but on a group level as well. We should normalize the ability for people to raise issues with their respective groups, departments, work teams, etc., and group meetings can be an opportunity for group problem solving. We should incorporate into evaluation processes not just people's ability to get something done, but their ability to work in teams. If teamwork is a stated organizational value, then there should be expectations around performance related to teamwork in order to give that value substance.

Objectivity

Objectivity is another important characteristic of white supremacy culture and connects directly to the idea of neutrality, which is something that is often proclaimed as a value of librarianship. That we are somehow neutral in the ways that we collect, preserve, and disseminate information. In organizations, that manifests as a belief that there is such a thing as being objective or neutral, but this completely ignores the fact that we all come from standpoints that are shaped by our own lived experiences, the ways in which we are socialized, how we experience power and/or privilege. Beyond that, objectivity also discounts the validity of non-linear thinking and the important role emotions play in decision-making. In these organizations, people who are seen as quote overly emotional are not taken seriously.

Objectivity also implies there's a single right way to think about issues and connects back to the problems around either/or

thinking. Moving away from an oppressive frame of objectivity means accepting the fact that neutrality is actually a myth. Every person has a world view that impacts how they understand things. I have some experience with dialogue as a formal framework for having challenging conversations, and an important aspect of genuine dialogue is learning how to listen actively when others express themselves in ways that are different from you. It means learning to hold your discomfort as you work to understand what others are trying to communicate to you about what they think.

Every person's perspective comes from the sum total of their lived experiences, so people are speaking their truths. While it is their responsibility to try to communicate to you as clearly as they can what they think, it is your responsibility to do your best to understand their perspective.

The right to comfort

The right to comfort is another characteristic of white supremacy culture. What this means is that those in power believe they have a right to psychological, cognitive, and emotional comfort, which connects to valuing logic over emotion. But as I mentioned at the beginning of the session, genuine learning, growth, and transformation happens when we move out of comfort into discomfort. This also means that there is a tendency to scapegoat individuals who cause discomfort because they are willing to challenge the status quo. And rather than see those people as pushing us to expand our thinking and solve problems creatively, we tend to blame them for causing conflict and label them as troublemakers. And Black, Indigenous, and persons of color are not granted the same right to comfort. If anything, these

communities often struggle to feel mentally, emotionally, and physically safe.

Another issue with this belief and the right to comfort is that it enables individuals to create false equivalencies, so an individual act of unfairness against a single white person becomes equated with systemic issues of racism that impact Black, Indigenous, and other people of color on a regular, daily basis.

If you hold power, resist feeling like you have a right to comfort. Embrace discomfort and understand that learning and growth means your own assumptions and beliefs have to be challenged and questioned. Deepen your analysis of racism and oppression, which means understanding the intersections of power and identity to better understand how your own lived experiences fit into larger systems of oppression and privilege. Work on your skills to engage in difficult dialogues such as the skill of active listening and learning not to be defensive.

Overworking

Overworking as an unstated norm is another characteristic that I think is prevalent in Libraries. There is a resilience mentality in libraries that constantly asks us to do more with less, and in order to accomplish the excessive number of tasks we are given we often find ourselves working when we are not at work. This can manifest in a number of ways. How often do you check email outside of your work hours? Do you work during your lunch breaks? Do you not even take breaks or put in extra hours outside of your normal work schedule without even telling anyone? This often happens because work plans are created without realistic timelines or appropriate levels of resources.

This can also manifest as asking and assuming your employees who are Black, Indigenous or other persons of color to undertake the quote “diversity work” of your organization. I think one of the harder things for us to do is to resist overworking. Foster a climate where self-care and community care is the norm, where everyone's mental, emotional, Psychological, and physical well-being are valued and prioritized. Respect time boundaries so that others can do the things in their personal lives that are just as important as work, such as caregiving responsibilities or tending to personal health issues. Build extra time and flexibility into work plans to allow for the unexpected.

If you're in a position of power, you have a responsibility to model a healthy work-life balance for your employees. Don't send emails that require actions outside of work hours. Even if you tell employees you don't expect them to respond, if you send an email that requires their attention after their scheduled hours, it is very easy for them to put pressure on themselves to work extra. Finally recognize that projects or initiatives that have a specific focus on diversity should also be assigned to white employees. Employees of color should not be expected to take on that work in addition to their normal job responsibilities, and if they do take on those projects, reallocate their workloads so others take on some of their regular responsibilities. Many people don't realize there is additional emotional labor that employees of color take on when they are tasked with quote “diversity work.” That labor should be accounted for.

Unwillingness to discuss race

The last hallmark of white supremacy culture that I want to discuss today is an unwillingness to discuss race in our

organizations. Even with more recent national attention being paid to anti-Black racism and many higher education institutions and academic libraries making public statements about committing to anti-racism, there is often still a great deal of reluctance for people to openly discuss race in their workplaces. People will change the subject or just avoid raising race issues altogether.

This demonstrates a limited understanding of how racial and cultural biases show up in every part of our lives, both professionally and personally. Often people frame difference as something bad or they make statements like, “I don’t see race, I just see people,” which completely erases the lived experiences of Black, Indigenous and other persons of color.

An avoidance of race discussions is often connected to two assumptions or perceptions. First, that if we talk about biases, we are automatically attacking white people, and the second is the assumption that white people can’t handle having conversations on race. These assumptions and lack of awareness feed into this behavior of avoidance, but failing to talk about race means we are missing crucial information and critical perspectives when we are making decisions or analyzing an issue.

Liberating ourselves from this prison of silence around race conversations means a lot of individual and collective action. Are we willing to be compassionately curious and question how race, bias, and culture might be impacting the issues or projects we are tackling? Can we acknowledge when our own or others’ unconscious biases might be showing up? And do we give ourselves the

space to pause, reflect on those biases, and then act against them?

Going back to some of the other practices I mentioned, we need to foster an environment where making mistakes is seen as a learning opportunity and not as a failure. If people are willing to engage in challenging conversations around race, they need to feel like they won’t be demonized if they make a mistake during those conversations. Avoid binary thinking around these issues and don’t try to set someone up for a gotcha moment, where we are setting up someone to make a mistake and then paint them as a bad person or as a racist. We all have bias, and we all engage in racist actions and anti-racist actions which can change from moment to moment. This is not a static thing; we are constantly learning, adapting and navigating complex race and other identity issues. Self-care is again really important. We need to develop our stamina for these discussions, ensure time for reflection. And finally, shaming others around race is counterproductive. We should focus on consciousness-building and racist behaviors and not shame. Shame is a barrier to change, to learning and growth, and I’m going to talk about shame in a moment.

So now that we have reviewed some of the characteristics of white supremacy culture, I want you to reflect on these statements. White supremacy culture can be and usually is present in organizations that are led by both white people and people of color. This culture is deeply ingrained in the fabric of U.S. society and no one is immune to it. And we have all internalized it to varying degrees. Anyone can uphold it if conscious action is not taken to resist it. White supremacy culture also hurts both white people and people of color. Hopefully, as we

reviewed the characteristics, you could each see how the practices and processes associated with each trait are harmful to people from any racial background.

And finally, white supremacy culture upholds other forms of intersectional oppression. The harmful traits of this culture also enable the oppression of people who hold identities that do not align with specific norms, so if you are not white, heterosexual, able-bodied, middle to upper class, cisgender, Christian, male or perceived as youthful, then you are much more likely to experience oppression. Dismantling oppression around white supremacy culture also means dismantling oppression around these other identities as well.

A word on shame and guilt

I want to take a moment to talk about shame and guilt which are feelings many people, particularly white people, feel when they start learning about the ways in which they might be complicit in maintaining white supremacy culture and systemic or structural racism in our workplaces and in our personal lives.

Brene Brown makes some great distinctions between shame and guilt. Shame is a destructive emotion, and when we feel shame we often make statements to ourselves like I'm a bad person. When we feel shame, we often hold it in and we don't talk about it with others, which can make us feel like we're alone in our horribleness. Because it is so isolating, it blocks our ability to feel empathy with others. We assume that other people can't be as bad as we are. Shame wears away our courage to make mistakes, to have challenging conversations, and as a result, fuels disengagement. Guilt is often confused with

shame, but it is different. When we feel guilt, we say things like I did something bad. That discomfort we feel is a result of us recognizing that an action we took did not align with what our values are. Guilt can motivate us to make amends for that harmful action, or it can push us to change harmful Behaviors. So guilt can actually be a useful emotion that can lead to a positive outcome.

As you work on resisting white supremacy culture, I'm charging you with these action statements. Let go of shame. Holding on to shame erodes your sense of self and also centers race issues around your own experience rather than centering the experience of others who are oppressed because of racist actions. Acknowledge when you feel guilt. Reflect upon why you feel guilty and then come up with the ways in which you will address guilt in a productive way and have the courage to hold yourself and others accountable for resisting oppression and for enacting specific anti-racist actions.

McKensie Mack on accountability

I would like to close this presentation with this quote from McKensie Mack, who spoke earlier this year about accountability. I really like their definition, and I ask you to reflect upon how accountability intersects with resisting oppression. Mack states accountability is preventing, intervening in, responding to, and healing from harm. We each bear a different responsibility for accountability.

Some of us, especially white People, are more empowered to prevent, intervene, or respond to racial harm. Those of us who are subjected to racist oppression have a responsibility to find ways to heal from racial harm. But we should never confuse

genuine accountability with shaming, and when we hold one another or ourselves accountable, we should do so with compassion.

I encourage you to watch the recording of their presentation if you haven't seen it already. Thank you for taking the time to listen to this presentation. I look forward to our discussion during the live portion of this session.